

The Blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh

48: 1-22

After receiving the oath from **Joseph** that **he** would be carried out of **Egypt** and buried with **Abraham** and **Isaac**, **Jacob** continued to be bedridden with a lot of time on his hands. Alone on his bed, **he** must have frequently reminisced, recalling the amazing events of his long walk with **the LORD**. One day, when **Yosef** came to visit him with his two Egyptian sons, **God** inspired **Ya'akov** to prophesy over them. This resulted in **Jacob** adopting **Ephraim** and **Manasseh** and elevating them to the status of full Israelite tribes along with **Joseph's** other brothers. Therefore, there were fourteen tribes of **Isra'el**, although no more than twelve are listed at any one time in the Bible. As we shall see, **the Ruach HaKodesh** has a specific reason for choosing some and omitting others, but many times **Ephraim** and **Manasseh** are included in the place of **Joseph**.

The passing over of the firstborn is one of the most striking features of **Genesis**. Five times this happened: (1) with **Seth** being chosen over Cain, (2) **Shem** being chosen over Japheth, (3) **Abraham** being chosen over Haran, (4) **Isaac** being chosen over Ishmael, (5) **Jacob** being chosen over Esau, (6) **Joseph** being chosen over **Reuben**, and now (7) **Ephraim** over **Manasseh**. **Ya'akov** gave the birthright to **Yosef** by changing the status of **Ephraim** and **Manasseh** from grandsons to sons.⁷⁴² In this way, **Joseph** inherited a double portion of the inheritance because his sons would then be included as equals among the brothers.